NHRC concern on Gujarat violence

2575. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether NHRC has recently expressed its serious concern on the pathetic condition of communal riot victims in Gujarat and urged the Union Government to directly intervene in the matter;

(b) if so, whether the State Government has totally failed to curb communal violence in the State;

(c) if so, whether demands have been made to investigate communal clashes in the State by a sitting Judge of the Supreme Court; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) The National Human Rights Commission in its Preliminary Report on the incidents in Gujarat has taken note of the rescue, relief and rehabilitation measures undertaken by the State Government and the strenuous efforts having been made by the Collectors and other District officials, often acting on their own initiative, to control the situation. Numerous complaints were received by the Team of the Commission during their visit regarding lack of facilities in the Camps set up for the victims. The Commission has noted the range of activities and measures taken by the State Government to pursue the relief and rehabilitation of those who have suffered. The Commission has further appreciated the positive steps that have been taken and has also commended those officials and other NGOs that have worked to ameliorate the sufferings of the victims. The Commission has made a number of recommendations for implementation by the State Government in order to bring normalcy back to Gujarat.

The Commission has in its report observed that there was a serious failure of intelligence and action by the State Government which marked the events leading to Godhra tragedy and subsequent deaths

and destruction that occurred. The Commission has also observed that in the light of the fact that numerous allegations have been made, both in the media and before the Team of the Commission, about the lack of faith in the integrity of the investigating process and the ability of those conducting investigation, there was need for greater transparency and integrity to investigate the instances of death and destruction of property and to instill confidence in the minds of the general public.

(c) and (d) The Commission has not recommended investigation of the communal clashes in the State by a sitting Judge of the Supreme Court. However, there have been demands from certain quarters including some political parties for an inquiry by a sitting Judge of the Supreme Court. The Government of Gujarat has to take a view on this demand.

New strategy on Kashmir

2576. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Centre working on new Kashmir strategy" as reported in the Times of India dated 21st March, 2002;

(b) if so, whether Government have formulated a new strategy on Kashmir;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the extent to which the new strategy will bring peace in the valley and strengthen its overall developments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) to (d) Presently, there is no proposal under consideration for a "major socio-economic package" on Kashmir. However, Government is pursuing a multi-pronged strategy to bring peace